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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 IO-13 CU-04 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 /059 W
----------089425 030234Z /75
R 021446Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO USMISSION GENEVA
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5948
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 0698

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, UY
SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS: YEHUDI MENUHIN'S INTEREST IN MIGUEL ESTRELLA

GENEVA FOR AMB. VANDEN HEUVEL FROM CHARGE

SECSTATE FOR ARA/ECA AMB. PEZZULLO

REF: GENEVA 3196 (NOTAL)

1. AMBASSADOR PEZZULLO IS CURRENTLY IN WASHINGTON ATTENDING ARA CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE. I AM TAKING THE LIBERTY OF SENDING YOU FOR YOUR INFORMATION THE TEXT OF HIS FEBRUARY 24 REPLY TO YEHUDI MENUHIN'S FEBRUARY 9 LETTER TO HIM, WHICH CONTAINS AN UP TO DATE REPORT OF OUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ESTRELLA CASE.

2. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF AMBASSADOR'S REPLY SENT TO MENUHIN'S LONDON ADDRESS VIA EMBASSY LONDON: QUOTE
DEAR MR. MENUHIN: I REFER TO YOUR LETTER OF FEBRUARY 9 REGARDING THE ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT BY THE URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES OF PIANIST, MIGUEL ANGEL ESTRELLA. I BROUGHT
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YOUR LETTER TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND URGED THAT HE ADVISE HIS GOVERNMENT OF YOUR CONCERN AND OF THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH YOU IN THIS EFFORT TO BRING ABOUT THE RELEASE OF MR. ESTRELLA. NOTING THE NUMBER OF INTER-NATIONALLY PRESTIGIOUS PEOPLE ASSOCIATED WITH THIS EFFORT, I TOLD THE FOREIGN MINISTER THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF URUGUAY WEIGH CAREFULLY THE INTERNATIONAL

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CONSEQUENCES OF ITS ACTIONS AND ITS OWN BEST INTERESTS IN
THIS MATTER.

THE FOREIGN MINISTER WAS WELL AWARE OF THE CASE AND INFORMED
ME THAT HE ALSO HAD BEEN APPROACHED RECENTLY BY THE BRITISH
AMBASSADOR. HE, AND OTHER URUGUAYAN OFFICIALS THAT I HAVE
CONTACTED, INDICATE THAT MR. ESTRELLA IS BEING HELD UNDER
URUGUAYAN SECURITY LAWS FOR HIS ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT IN
URUGUAY WITH THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ARGENTINE-BASED MONTONERO
MOVEMENT. I UNDERSTAND MR. ESTRELLA IS VERY UPSET WITH HIS
DETENTION, BUT OTHERWISE IS IN GOOD HEALTH. HE IS CON-
FINED IN LA LIBERTAD PRISON, A RELATIVELY NEW FACILITY.

QUITE CLEARLY THE URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES AT MANY LEVELS ARE
FULLY AWARE OF THE EFFORTS OF YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES IN
THIS MATTER, AS WELL AS THE INTEREST EXPRESSED BY MYSELF
AND OTHER OF MY DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES.

YOU MAY BE ASSURED THAT WE WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE
TO CONTINUE TO ASSIST IN THIS MATTER. SINCERELY YOURS,
LAWRENCE A. PEZZULLO, AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA. UNQUOTE.

3. WE APPRECIATE YOUR OFFER OF ASSISTANCE. ALTHOUGH
THERE PROBABLY IS NOT TOO MUCH THAT CAN BE DONE FROM THERE,
YOU COULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY OPPORTUNITIES PRIVATELY
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TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH GOU OFFICIALS EITHER ASSIGNED
TO OR PASSING THROUGH GENEVA. AS INDICATED ABOVE THE
POINTS TO MAKE ARE: (A) BY IMPRISONING ESTRELLA THE GOU
RISKS INCURRING A BOYCOTT OF URUGUAY BY THE WORLD'S LEADING
CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC FIGURES WHICH WOULD BE A SERIOUS BLOW
TO THE NATION'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE; (B) ALTHOUGH ALLEGED
OFFENSES OF ESTRELLA ARE DIRECTED AGAINST THE ARGENTINE
GOVERNMENT, THE GOA NOTABLY HAS NEITHER REQUESTED HIS
EXTRADITION NOR PUBLICLY SUPPORTED HIS DETENTION BY THE
GOU; (C) THE GOU SHOULD CAREFULLY CONSIDER WHERE
URUGUAYAN SELF-INTEREST LIE IN DISPOSING OF THIS CASE.
FYI: ESTRELLA IS WELL KNOWN AS AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF
THE MONTONERO CAUSE BUT HE HAS NOT BEEN DIRECTLY LINKED
WITH THEIR OPERATIONS. ALTHOUGH GOU SECURITY OFFICIALS BELIEVE
HIS INVOLVEMENT GOES MUCH DEEPER, THEIR SPECIFIC CASE
AGAINST HIM REPORTEDLY IS BASED ON USE OF HIS RENTED
BEACH HOUSE NEAR MONTEVIDEO BY MONTENERO ACTIVISTS
AND THE FACT THAT FORGED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS WERE FOUND
HIDDEN IN THIS HOUSE WHEN IT WAS RAIDED AND ESTRELLA
SEIZED, ALTHOUGH HE DENIES KNOWLEDGE OF THEM. END FYI.

4. WE WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW ESTRELLA CASE CLOSELY

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AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY OPPORTUNITY CONSTRUCTIVELY TO
ASSIST. WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS.

5. YOU MAY WISH TO REPEAT YOUR TELEGRAM TO LONDON FOR
AMBASSADOR BREWSTER WHO ALSO HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH
MENUHIN ON THIS MATTER.
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Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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